

# AFL-CIO ON LITHUANIA

The Honorable George Bush  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

**Dear Mr. President:**

On behalf of the more than fourteen million members of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to move swiftly and surely to confer U.S. Government recognition on the legitimately elected government of the Republic of Lithuania. As part of this process, I urge you to exchange ambassadors and, with Congressional support, to extend MFN status to Lithuania.

Now, as never before, the brave Lithuanian people are looking for support from all nations that respect democracy and human rights. The AFL-CIO is proud of its fraternal association with the Lithuanian Workers' Union, a labor organization that is a part of the Sajudis movement. We are writing to you about our concerns in response to a direct appeal for help from the chairman of the Lithuanian Workers' Union, Kazimieras Uoka, and to an appeal from President Vytautas Landsbergis. In electing President Landsbergis, Deputy Uoka, and other Sajudis candidates to high office, the people of Lithuania have made a historic and fateful decision to proclaim their inalienable right of national sovereignty.

The people of Lithuania have spoken clearly and unequivocally for their national independence. This is why the AFL-CIO stands with President Landsbergis and all Lithuanian citizens and patriots. And this is why we condemn the tactics of intimidation and repression adopted by the Soviet Union against a democratically-elected sovereign state. Such violation of international law deserves to be criticized resolutely by the United States.

While the AFL-CIO welcomes the gradual opening up of the Soviet political system, we believe that Soviet progress in moving away from totalitarianism deserves to be encouraged further. The U.S., therefore must not remain silent when significant Soviet abuses of human and national rights occur.

We are certain, as we were in our steadfast support for Soladarnosc in Poland, of the ultimate success of the peaceful struggle for national self-determination waged by the Lithuanians and other peoples forcibly absorbed into the USSR.

I hope that, in this compelling instance, the United States can speak out clearly and forcefully in behalf of liberty in a way that is consonant with our democratic tradition.

Respectfully,  
**Lane Kirkland**  
President, AFL-CIO

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